relating to expansion of bilateral trade. The JSG had its first meeting in New Delhi in February, 2005 and constituted two Working Groups—(1) on Customs Cooperation and Trade Facilitation Measures and (2) on Non Tariff Barriers. Thus, the issues of non-tariffs and para-tariffs are being looked into by this JSG.

Function of APEDA

961. SHRI S.S. CHANDRAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the major functions of Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA);

(b) its location and branches, if any; and

(c) its contribution in promoting exports?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) is engaged in development and promotion of exports of certain scheduled agriculture and processed food products like fruits, vegetables, meat, poultry, dairy, cocoa etc. specified in the APEDA Act, 1985. To this end, it is involved in:

(i) development of industries relating to the scheduled products for export by way of providing financial assistance or otherwise;

(ii) registration of exporters of the scheduled products;

(iii) fixing of standards and specifications for export of scheduled products;

(iv) inspection of meat and meat products;

(v) improving packaging of scheduled products;

(vi) improving marketing of scheduled products out of India;

(vii) promotion of export oriented production and development of the scheduled products;

(viii) collection of statistics from the owners of factories or establishments engaged' in production, processing etc. of scheduled products and the publication of the statistics so collected;

(ix) training in various aspects of the industries connected with the scheduled products;

(x) Other matters as may be prescribed.

(b) APEDA has its Head Office in New Delhi and has regional offices at Mumbai, Bangalore, Kolkata, Hyderabad, Guwahati and virtual offices at Patna, Raipur, Ahmedabad, Srinagar, Thiruvananthapuram, Bhopal, Lamphelpat, Kohima, Bhubaneshwar, Chandigarh, Chennai, Agartala and Lucknow.

(c) APEDA is contributing to the efforts to enhance exports of agricultural and processed foods through setting up of infrastructure projects like centres of perishable cargo at international airports, wholesale market-cum-auction centres, common infrastructure facilities for handling fresh fruits and vegetables etc. It is also involved in residue monitoring and recognition of laboratories for the purpose, it has assisted 350 export units for setting up packaging and grading lines, intermediate sheds, crates for transportation, equipments for in house labs, pre-cooling units, high humidity cold storages, refrigerated transport units etc.

Fall in seafood exports after Tsunami

962. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether seafood export and number of seafood exporters especially shrimp exports feel sharply after Tsunami of December, 2004;

(b) if so, the details including number of exporters associated with shrimp export to US, quantity of shrimp exported to united States and the amount of foreign exchange received during the period January, 2004 to June, 2005, month-wise and category-wise;

(c) the details of action taken to protect sea export especially shrimp export;

(d) whether any action is being taken to revoke anti-dumping duties imposed on shrimp from India by US;

(e) if so, the reasons thereof; and